

A
H E L P
T O T H E
DEVOUT PERFORMANCE
O F
Private P R A Y E R.

MARK viii. 38. *Whoſoever ſhall be aſhamed of me, and of my Words, in this adulterous and ſinful Generation; of him alſo ſhall the Son of Man be aſhamed, when he cometh in the Glory of his Father with the Holy Angels.*

2 THESS. v. 17. *Pray without ceasing. In every Thing give Thanks: For this is the Will of GOD in CHRIST JESUS concerning you.*

By the Moſt Reverend Dr. EDWARD SYNGE,
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An Answer to all the Excuses and Pretences, which Men uſually make for their not coming to the Holy Communion.

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T O T H E
Serious and Devout READER.

THE following Paper is written for the Use of a sober Man, who, having always had some Sense of Religion, is yet sensible that he has not been careful in the Performance of the Duties of it; and particularly in that of PRAYER; wherein he has often lamented that he has found his Thoughts usually very apt to wander. For which Reason the Forms here recommended to him, are divided into short Paragraphs, that he may the more easily keep his Mind attentive to them. I hope they may be of some Service both to him and others: And if a Man will take the Pains to commit them, or others of the like Import, to his Memory; he may pray in a Manner acceptable to GOD, not only in his Closet, but wherever else he is or may be.

There is nothing in any of these Forms but what may, with a good Conscience, be made use of by Christians of all Persuasions. And therefore I shall venture to recommend them to those of the Church of ROME, who desire to Pray with their Understanding, according to St. PAUL's Rule. 1 Cor. xiv. 15.

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A
H E L P
TO THE
DEVOUT PERFORMANCE
OF
Private PRAYER.

S I R,

YOU desire to have such a Form of private Prayer composed for you, as may be well adapted to your Circumstances. The Forms which I here send you, I hope may be useful not only to yourself, but to others also; altho' their Circumstances may not be exactly the same with yours.

In the publick Worship of God, either in the Church or Family, the Devotion of the whole Congregation ought to be united; and it is by much the most convenient way that it should be expressed in such Words as are known beforehand; that all the People may prepare their Hearts to join in them. But in your private Devotions there is no Necessity that you should confine yourself to a certain Form of Words. For God knows your Thoughts. But yet a Form of Words may be of very good Use to keep you attentive to what you are about.

Whenever you are going to address yourself to God in Prayer whether Publick or Private; First compose your Thoughts, and withdraw them, as much as possibly you can, from every thing else,

and lift up your Mind in this or some such like Ejaculation.

“ **O** Great and glorious LORD GOD! possess my
 “ Mind with a devout and awful Appre-
 “ hension of Thy Greatness, Thy Goodness, Thy
 “ Justice, Thy Mercy, Thy Presence in all Places,
 “ and Thy Knowledge of all Things. And give
 “ me a just Sense of that great Privilege which
 “ Thou vouchsafest to us Thy Creatures, notwith-
 “ standing our Sinfulness and Unworthiness, of
 “ offering up our Supplications to Thee our Great
 “ Creator, and more especially in the Name, and
 “ through the Mediation of thy well beloved Son
 “ JESUS CHRIST our Lord. Make me attentive and
 “ devout in these my humble Addresses to Thee.
 “ Hear my Prayer, and let my Cry come unto
 “ Thee; for JESUS CHRIST’s Sake. *Amen.*

Whenever you go to the publick Worship of GOD; before the Service begins, offer up this or some such Ejaculation both for yourself and the whole Congregation: And then keep your Mind composed.

Under this general Word *Prayer*, four Things are contained. *First*, Confession of Sins, and begging the Pardon of them. *Secondly*, Praise and Thanksgiving to GOD. *Thirdly*, Intercession for all the rest of Mankind. And *Fourthly*, Petition for all the Blessings which the Person or Persons praying more immediately stand in need of. None of which ought to be omitted, whenever we solemnly address ourselves to GOD, whether publickly or privately. Altho’ it is not material in what Order they are placed. The Forms of these, which I here send you, are couched in few Words. Your Devotion will often prompt you to enlarge upon them (I hope) in your Thoughts, as you make use of them.

1. *A Form for the Confession of Sins, and begging the Pardon of them.*

“ **O** Great and Glorious LORD GOD! with
 “ Shame and Confusion I lay my Sins,
 “ which are very many, before Thee: And with
 “ Horror I consider the great Guilt which I have
 “ thereby contracted, and the Punishment which
 “ I justly deserve for them.

“ I have sinned in my Inclinations and Desires,
 “ in my Words and Actions.

“ I have sinned in my Childhood, my Youth,
 “ and my riper Age; through Haste and Passion,
 “ and with Thought and Deliberation, contrary
 “ to the Checks and Restraints of my own Con-
 “ science.

“ I have made Vows and Resolutions against
 “ particular Sins, and have not been watchful o-
 “ ver myself to keep them; but have returned to
 “ the same Sins again.

“ I have omitted and neglected to do those things
 “ which I ought to have done, and have done
 “ those things which I ought not to have done.

“ *Mine Iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that*
 “ *I am not able to look up; they are more than the*
 “ *Hairs of my Head; therefore my Heart faileth me*
 “ (Psal. xl. 12.) and would for ever fail me, were
 “ it not for thy Mercy in and through JESUS CHRIST,
 “ our Saviour and Redeemer.

“ O Gracious GOD! give me a just and deep
 “ Sense of my many and crying Sins. Make me,
 “ in a Godly manner, truly sorrowful and peni-
 “ tent for them, and grant me the full and free
 “ Pardon of them all, for the Sake of JESUS CHRIST.

“ Give me Grace, that I may be careful and
 “ watchful over my Thoughts, Inclinations, De-

“ fires, Words, and Actions; and make them all
 “ conformable to thy holy Will and Law.

“ *Work in me both to will and to do of thy good*
 “ *Pleasure* (Phil. ii. 13.) work the Work of true
 “ Sanctification in me; and create in me a De-
 “ testation and Abhorrence of every Thing that is
 “ contrary to thy holy Will and Law.

“ Make me deeply sensible of, and in a Godly
 “ Manner penitent for the great and sinful Neg-
 “ lect, of which I have all along been guilty, in
 “ carrying on the Work of Sanctification within
 “ me. O grant me the full Pardon of all that is
 “ past; and make me careful and diligent for the
 “ Time to come, that I may never again return to
 “ my Sins. And this I humbly beg for the Sake
 “ of thy well beloved Son JESUS CHRIST our Lord.

“ *Hide thy Face from my Sin; and blot out all mine*
 “ *Iniquities. Create in me a clean Heart, O GOD;*
 “ *and renew a right Spirit within me. Cast me not*
 “ *away from thy Presence; and take not thy Holy*
 “ *Spirit from me. Restore unto me the Joy of thy*
 “ *Salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit.*”
 Psal. li. 9, &c.

II. *A Form of Praise and Thanksgiving to GOD.*

“ **A**LL Honour and Glory, Praise and Thankf-
 “ giving be rendered unto Thee, O GOD;
 “ for thine infinite Excellencies and Perfections,
 “ whereby Thou so far excellest all other Things;
 “ which are but Thy Creatures, and the Work of
 “ Thy Hands.

“ For thy Mercy and Goodness to all Thy Crea-
 “ tures; particularly to Mankind.

“ For our Creation, and the rational Souls which
 “ Thou hast given us, endowed with so many
 “ noble Faculties.

“ For

" For our Food, Raiment, and all the Necessaries, Conveniencies, and Comforts of this Life, which Thou has so bountifully bestowed on us

" For our Preservation from so many Dangers, wherewith we are every Day encompassed, and which we escape only by thy watchful Providence over us.

" But above all, for the Knowledge of Thee, and of Thy Holy Will and Law, which Thou hast been pleased to give us, partly by our own Reason, and more fully by that Revelation which Thou hast made in Thy Holy Word, for the quietting of our Minds and Consciences here, and the guiding us to eternal Happiness hereafter.

" For the sending of Thy beloved Son into this World, to take our Nature upon him, and to undergo so many bitter Sufferings for us, to redeem us from the Slavery of Sin, and the Punishment due to it, and to bring us to everlasting Life and Happiness.

" For the Gifts and Graces of Thy Holy Spirit bestowed upon us, to further us in the Way of Salvation.

" And for all the Means of Grace, and the well grounded Hope of eternal Glory, which Thou hast vouchsafed to us by our Blessed Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST.

" For these and all other Thy Blessings and Mercies to me and to all Mankind, I humbly offer up unto Thee my Praises and Thanksgivings; beseeching Thee so to touch the Hearts of us all with a due Sense of them, that we may shew forth thy Praise not only with our Lips, but in our Lives, by walking before Thee in Holiness and Righteousness all our Days; through JESUS CHRIST our Lord: To whom with Thee and

" the

“ the HOLY GHOST be all Honour and Glory;
 “ World without End. *Amen.*”

III. *A Form of Intercession, or Supplication for all Men.*

“ NOT for myself alone, O God, but also
 “ for all Mankind, High and Low, Rich
 “ and Poor, Friends, Strangers, and Enemies, I
 “ offer up my Prayers and Supplications to Thee.
 “ Spread the Knowledge of Thy Gospel and
 “ true Religion throughout the whole World;
 “ and bring all Men to the true Faith in Thee
 “ and Thy Son JESUS CHRIST.

“ Grant that All, who profess Thy Gospel, may
 “ lay aside all unnecessary Disputes and Contro-
 “ versies, and agree in those Things which Thou
 “ hast made necessary to eternal Salvation.

“ Grant that they may all live in the true Fear
 “ of Thee, in sincere Love and Charity one to-
 “ ward another; and in the conscientious Practice
 “ of Sobriety, Temperance, Chastity, Humility,
 “ and all other Christian Virtues and Graces:
 “ That *their Light may so shine before Men, that*
 “ *they, seeing their good Works, may glorify Thee our*
 “ *Heavenly Father.* Mat. v. 16.

“ Deliver Thy Church, every where, from Per-
 “ secution and Oppression; that all, who are peace-
 “ able and truly conscientious, may have the Li-
 “ berty of serving Thee with a pure Conscience.

“ Bless all Kings, Princes and Magistrates;
 “ more especially those who are of the true Faith
 “ and Religion; and among them more particu-
 “ larly, our Gracious Sovereign Lord King
 “ GEORGE, and all who are put in Authority un-
 “ der Him. Move and effectually incline all their
 “ Hearts impartially to administer Justice, duly
 “ tempered

" tempered with Equity for the Good of Man-
 " kind; and sincerely to promote Peace, Virtue,
 " true Religion, and Piety throughout the whole
 " Earth.

" Together with our Sovereign Lord the KING,
 " bless and prosper all the Royal Family: And
 " grant that there may never want one of them, in a
 " due Succession, to sway the Sceptre of these
 " Kingdoms in Righteousness, Peace, and Pros-
 " perity, as long as the World shall last.

" Bless all the Bishops, Pastors, and Teachers
 " of the whole Christian Church. Make them
 " all holy and exemplary in their Lives, pure in
 " their Doctrine, and faithful and diligent in the
 " Discharge of their several Duties; that by their
 " Means, through thy Grace co-operating with
 " them, true and pure Religion, both as to Faith
 " and Practice, may be planted and rooted in the
 " Hearts of all who profess the Name of CHRIST.

" Give us such Plenty of the kindly Fruits of
 " the Earth, and make us so diligent, frugal, and
 " prudent in the Management of them, as that
 " no Man may want Food, Raiment, or the com-
 " mon Necessaries of Life; and teach us all to be
 " well content with whatsoever Thou shalt think
 " fit to bestow upon us.

" Look down upon all who labour under Po-
 " verty, Pain, Sicknes, or any other Calamity.
 " Sanctify their several Afflictions to them; give
 " them Patience to bear them, and in thy good
 " Time a happy Deliverance from them.

" Pardon my Enemies, and turn their Hearts
 " and mine to Love and Charity. Look down
 " upon all my Friends and Acquaintance, and up-
 " on all Mankind, and shower down thy Bless-
 " ings spiritual and temporal upon us all, in such
 " Manner

“ Manner and Measure as Thou knowest to be
 “ best and fittest for each of us, and most con-
 “ ducing to our Support and Comfort here, and
 “ our eternal Happiness hereafter; through JESUS
 “ CHRIST our Lord. To whom, &c.”

A short Form of Petition for yourself and Family.

“ **O** Good God, look down upon me Thy un-
 “ worthy Servant, and upon my Wife and
 “ Family; and all the Blessings spiritual and tem-
 “ poral, which I have prayed for in the behalf of
 “ others, be pleased to shower down upon me and
 “ mine, according to our Circumstances and Ca-
 “ pacities.

“ Again and again, I beseech Thee, make us
 “ all truly penitent for all our Sins, thankful for
 “ all thy Mercies, diligent in the Performance of
 “ all Duties, and careful to avoid all Sin and Wick-
 “ edness; and grant us the Pardon of all we have
 “ done amiss in the whole Course of our Lives.

“ Make us willing to die, whenever thou shalt
 “ think fit to call us away; and fit and prepare
 “ us, by true Faith, sincere Repentance, and a
 “ holy Life, for Death and a happy Eternity; and
 “ grant us an easy Passage out of this World, in
 “ Peace and Quietness of Mind and Conscience,
 “ and true Reconciliation with Thee, and, if it
 “ be Thy blessed Will, without Pain or Torment
 “ of Body.

“ As long as Thou shalt be pleased to continue
 “ us in this Life, grant to us Ease, Health, Strength,
 “ a quiet and contented Mind, a right Understanding
 “ Food, Raiment, and all the Necessaries of Life,
 “ in such a Measure as thou knowest to be best and
 “ fittest for us. But above all, grant us thy Grace,
 “ that we may live holily, virtuously, religiously,
 “ and

“ and piously here, and be eternally happy with
 “ Thee hereafter. Continue this Blessing to my
 “ latest Posterity.

“ And whatsoever thou knowest to be best and
 “ fittest for us and for all Mankind, I humbly beg
 “ in the Name and through the Mediation of thy
 “ Son, our Lord JESUS CHRIST. To whom, with
 “ Thee and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and
 “ Glory now and for ever. *Amen.*

“ *Our Father, &c. The Grace of our Lord
 JESUS CHRIST, &c.*”

In the repeating or reading this Form of Prayer,
 and more especially the *Lord's Prayer*; at the End
 of each Sentence or Period, make a little Pause,
 and recollect in your Mind what it is that you
 have last said. This, with GOD's Blessing, will
 be a good Help to keep your Thoughts from wan-
 dering, and to make you attentive upon what you
 are doing. For without Attention, there can be
 no true Devotion.

This Form of Prayer, for the most Part, is con-
 ceived in general Words. You may, in your own
 Mind, insert what Particulars you shall think fit
 in it, or make Additions to it, as you proceed in
 the using of it. I pray for you, and am your, &c.

*I recommend to you the following Meditation; which
 is an old Translation from the French. However
 mean the Poetry may appear, I am sure you will
 approve of the Sense of it.*

“ SWEET JESUS! who shall give me Wings
 “ Of pure and Heav'nly Love;
 “ That I may fly from earthly Things,
 “ And dwell with Thee above?

“ For

- " For There are Joys both firm and fast,
 " Where no Man doth lament;
 " But Here are Toys, which, first or last,
 " All mortal Men repent.
 " Therefore my Soul doth loath the Things,
 " Wherein she took Delight;
 " And unto Thee, the King of Kings,
 " Doth fly with all her Might.
 " But still the Weight of Flesh and Blood
 " Does so her Flight restrain,
 " That oft' I strive, but do small Good;
 " I rise and fall again.
 " Lo thus, Dear Lord, I fly about,
 " In weak and woful Case;
 " Like to the Dove *Noah* sent out,
 " Which found no resting Place.
 " My weary'd Wings, sweet JESUS, mark;
 " And when thou seest it best,
 " Stretch forth thy Hand from out the Ark,
 " And take me to thy Rest."

A short Meditation against the Fear of Death.

- " **W**HY should I fear what all must undergo?
 " Why should I fear the End of all my Woe?
 " Why should I fear the only Way to Bliss?
 " And without which no Happiness there is?
 " Why should the Weary fear to go to Rest?
 " The Course, which GOD has settled, sure is best.
 " The Sting of Death is gone: Why should I fear
 " What JESUS CHRIST enables me to bear?